Mercy, Not Sacrifice

College Student Spirituality & Social Concern and Action
2010 Dalton Institute on College Student Values
Philip D. Byers & Timothy W. Herrmann
“For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.”

- Hosea 6:6
Context

- Culture expressing similar sentiment

- Rebirth of interest in spirituality among the academy: Astin, 2004; Chickering, Dalton, & Stamm, 2005; Freitas, 2008; Kuh & Gonyea, 2006; Love & Talbot, 1999; Murphy, 2005

- How might spirituality and social concern interact?
Outline

- Introduction and review of literature
- Presentation of new quantitative research
- Practical application and discussion
- Conclusion
Pertinent literature & themes

• Spirituality in higher ed
  • Spirituality inseparable from earliest American higher education (Rudolph, 1960; Stamm, 2005; Thelin, 2004; Williams, 2002)
  • Shift beginning in latter 19\textsuperscript{th} century (Ringenberg, 2006)
  • Higher education as hostile to / negligent of spirituality in 20\textsuperscript{th} century (Allport, 1950; Freitas, 2008; Lindholm & Astin, 2007; Marsden, 1994; Ringenberg, 2006)
  • Rebirth: the Astins, Chickering, Dalton & Kuh
Pertinent literature & themes

• Social concern and action in higher ed
  • Social engagement *always* a goal of higher education (Dalton, 2006; Rudolph, 1960; Thelin, 2003; Vine, 1998)
  • No decline: Progressive movement
    • Wisconsin Idea
    • College settlement movement
    • “Princeton in the Nation’s Service,” 1896
Social concern and action in higher ed, cont.

“The object of education is not merely to draw out the powers of the individual mind: it is rather its right object to draw all minds to a proper adjustment to the physical and social world in which they are to have their life and their development.”

“The University in our day is no longer inclined to stand aloof from the practical world and, surely, it ought never to have had the disposition to do so.”

“It is not learning but the spirit of service that will give a college place in the public annals of the nation.”
Pertinent literature & themes

- Social concern and action in higher ed, cont.
  - 1986, development of Campus Compact
  - 1987, NASPA’s “A Perspective on Student Affairs”
  - 1998, Wingspread Declaration
  - Major publications by NASPA / ACPA & AAHE
  - Smith & Snell (2009) find disconnect between expressed purposes of higher education and subsequent priorities of emerging adults
Pertinent literature & themes

• Motivations for social concern and action
  • Egoistic
    • Personal fulfillment
    • Informed by Maslow’s (1970) hierarchy of needs (see also Zlotkowski, 2005)
  • Altruistic
    • Primarily philanthropic
    • Allen & Rushton, 1983; Wakefield, 1993
• What about spirituality?
  • Kuh & Gonyea, 2006; Oliner, 2005; Serow & Dreyden, 1990
Pertinent literature & themes

• Defining spirituality
  • Internal & individual (developing meaning and purpose), but not precluding external manifestations (Cherry, De Berg, & Porterfield, 2001; Love, 2001; Parks, 2000)
  • Fowler’s *Stages of Faith* (1981)
    • General progression from the egocentric outward
    • Stage 4 – usually associated with experience at college, it promotes ideas of responsibility and contribution
Pertinent literature & themes

- Defining social concern and action
  - Theory / research underdeveloped in higher ed
  - Bell (1997): “involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others, their society, and the broader world” (pp. 1-2).
  - Quaye (2007): concept of “critical hope,” challenging inequity and working toward improved circumstances
Pertinent literature & themes

• Measuring spirituality
  • Complex (Bryant, Choi, & Yasuno, 2003; Slater, Hall, & Edwards, 2001)
  • Allport & Ross (1967), conceptualizing I / E model of religious expression – still referenced (Astin, Astin, & Lindholm, n. d.; Welch & Mellberg, 2008)
  • Chickering (2005) and the importance of longitudinal study
Research

- HERI College Student Beliefs and Values (CSBV) – 2003 pilot study
- 3,544 participants
- Spirituality: *Spiritual Identification* scale (.88 & .89)
- Social concern & action: a) *Charitable involvement* (.67 & .71); b) *Ethic of caring* (.79 & .82; c) *Compassionate self-concept* (.78)
Research, cont.

- Simple correlation comparing spirituality with the three scales of social concern and action
- Compassionate: .266
- Ethic of Caring: .387
- Charitable: .286
- All three significant at the .01 level, but...
Research, cont.

Scale correlation with spirituality -- Overall

- Compassion
- Ethic Caring
- Charitable

Pearson's r
Additional research concerning the role of *institutional type*: Do spirituality and institutional type interact to influence the development of social concern & action?
Research, cont.

Institutional type means -- Spirituality

Pub  Pri  Pub-4  Pri-4  Rel-4

Mean
Research, cont.

Institutional type means – Compassionate

![Bar graph showing Institutional type means for Compassionate values.]

- Mean values for different institutional types (Pub, Pri, Pub-4, Pri-4, Rel-4).
Research, cont.

Institutional type means – Ethic of Caring

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Research, cont.

Institutional type means – Charitable
Practical application

- Lighthouse
- Taylor World Outreach
Connection to Institute themes

- Future Opportunities in Values and Character Initiatives
- Practical Applications of Values in Higher Education
- Moral and Ethical Issues Facing College Students in the 21st Century
Discussion & questions
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“Let us not neglect the matter. By mercy, we greatly benefit ourselves, not the poor only. We receive much more than we provide.”

-John Chrysostom
References


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